



Office Hours:

**9 am—3 pm
Monday - Thursday
Closed Fridays**

Contact Messiah:

**402-694-2017
Church Office**

**Email:
messiah@
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**Email Pastor Rudy:
pastor@
messiahaurora.org**

**Find us on
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@MessiahAuroraNE



MESSIAH MESSENGER

Messiah Lutheran Church, 415 S. 18th St., Aurora, NE 68818

January

*Happy
Birthday*

Jan 1	Ashton Voss	Jan 18	Leightyn Jensen
Jan 1	Brian Yott	Jan 20	Dave Frickel
Jan 4	Kenna Merrihew	Jan 20	Richard Schaffert
Jan 4	Tainee Merrihew	Jan 22	Pauline Hahn
Jan 4	Chandler Voss	Jan 22	Rinn Perry
Jan 7	Rita Katt	Jan 22	Ronan Perry
Jan 7	Kristi Redman	Jan 22	Lisa Werner
Jan 8	Grace Ziegler	Jan 23	Randy Papineau
Jan 8	Noah Ziegler	Jan 25	Brysen Faller
Jan 9	Scott Schuster	Jan 27	Millie Nadeau
Jan 9	Dan Ziegler	Jan 27	Chase Perry
Jan 10	Cassandra Hahn	Jan 29	Sam Jones
Jan 11	Chris Lamprecht	Jan 29	Troy Knust
Jan 13	Rick Goertzen	Jan 31	Quintin Lange
Jan 15	Jameson Herzberg	Jan 31	Michelle Sabata

*Happy
Anniversary*

Jan 9 Barb and Tom Cox

Please plan on joining us for our Annual Meeting Sunday, **February. 18th**, following worship.



All confirmed members of Messiah are eligible to vote and should plan on attending. Your voice & vote matter to the ministry here at Messiah!

Annual Meeting Reports are due to the office by January 15th!

Weekly Messenger Prayer List

A new list of Weekly Messenger "In Our Thoughts & Prayers" will begin January 1st. **If you would like someone to remain on the Weekly Messenger Prayer list or be added, please contact the office.**



The prayer list is updated each calendar year quarter (January, April, July, October).

Powered by God's Grace, serving the church, community, and world through Christ-centered faith.

A Word From Pastor Rudy

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing...

Happy New Year to you all and to your families! As we welcome 2024, we all have our hopes for the coming year and for me, my hopes are that you all have a wonderful year. This past year, our Messiah family endured times of great joy and great sorrow. Together, we walked along with each other giving support when needed. We heard many stories in our gospel readings of staying awake and being prepared, and that is what this gathering of believers did. We worked together on many social ministries that went to help other people in our community and beyond. It was a great year of giving from the heart and I look forward to what our community of faith will do for the world this year.

This year will, no doubt, bring new challenges and changes and I look forward to exploring those new opportunities together. I want to give a heartfelt "Thank You" to Diana Shaffer for her dedication to working with me in the church office. She was the chair of the Call Committee that helped to bring me here and it will take a while to get used to not seeing her almost every day. She is such a gift to our congregation, keeping everything organized and moving smoothly. I wish her the best as she and Craig spend more time with family.

I will be welcoming new members to Messiah during the month of January. More information will be coming about this soon. If you or someone you know is interested in joining, please let me know. As we approach the season of Epiphany, we will look at the good news of God coming to the world in the person of Jesus Christ, bringing the promise of love and grace. We will then move right into the season of Lent which will begin on February 14 with Ash Wednesday. I will be having a class for those interested in their First Communion with more information coming out later this month.

With all of this activity happening right from the start of this new year, I pray that God continues to surround you all with God's love and mercy. May you always feel God's presence in your times of need and your times of joy. Remember that Jesus came into this world as a sign of God's love and tells us that He is with us always. Until the end of time. God's peace be with you all in this new year of our Lord.

Peace,
Pastor Rudy Flores



Pastor Rudy's Bible Study

***Sunday Bible Study Beginning January 7!
Fellowship Hall at 10:15 a.m.***

Happy New Year! I will be having a bible study on the beginning of Genesis, looking at the creation story(s). You are encouraged to bring your personal bibles as we look at Genesis and have a discussion about creation and how it represents God's love for all of the world and how that continues even today. All ages are welcome for this 4 week conversation. All study materials will be provided so bring your coffee and treats over to the Mission Room beginning after service on January 7.

**Are you interested in
becoming a member of
Messiah?**

If so, please contact Pastor Rudy or the church office.



Council Minutes

Messiah Lutheran Council Meeting November 20th, 2023

Present: Pastor Flores, Cheryl Frickel, Melissa Griffith, Mike Herzberg, Todd Jensen, Allissa Marty, Kim McCain, Troy McCain, Craig Shaffer, Steve Vrana, Dixie Ziegler

Devotion and Prayer – Steve opened the meeting with prayer.

Call Meeting to Order – The council meeting was called to order by Council President Steve Vrana at 6:35pm.

Minutes of previous meeting – The council reviewed the minutes from the October regular council meeting. Cheryl motioned to approve the minutes with amendments. The motion was seconded by Troy, and it carried. The minutes from the November special meeting were reviewed. Cheryl motioned to approve the minutes with the amendments, Allisa seconded, and the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – The Treasurer's Report for October 2023 was reviewed.

Checking account balance--\$67,087.14

Current--\$39,686.47

Building--\$6768.10

Outstanding--\$20,632.57

Money Market balance--\$28,962.33

Helping Hands balance--\$1,944.71

Youth Group balance--\$13,451.30

Fireworks Stand Account balance--\$7,494.32

Mission Investment balance--\$16,204.22

Mission Investment 1 year CD - \$25,000.00

Building Loan Balance as of 10-31-23 \$108,917.60

Income for the month of October was under the expected budget by \$1,784.15. Expenses were also under budget by \$7,462.61.

The first quarter CD interest will be added to the Mission Fund when it is paid.

The final payment on the new sound equipment was made.

Dixie made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. It was seconded by Todd. All were in favor, motion carried.

Pastor's Report--October

Many activities were held in October. There were:

Pet Blessing which went well.

Grace Ziegler guest speaker for the contemporary service

Reformation/Confirmation Sunday with two confirmands

Youth programs continue to grow and learn. The confirmation students have been helping with GLOW when needed. Pastor continues to help with the Youth Group. Pumpkin carving was a success!

Pastor is working with Pastor Reed for the December Christmas Hymn sing.

One Christmas Eve Service is planned for December 24th.

Pastor continues to work with the internal and external committees on long range planning.

He continues to work with Megan Dam on the website.

A new visitor's card is available in the pews.

Cards sent—29

Calls/texts made—36

Visits made—35

Council Minutes continued

Committee's Reports

- Property – Troy McCain
The bulletin boards that were taken down are now back up on the walls.
The water cooler in the educational wing is working again.
- Worship – Dixie Ziegler
No report
- Education – Allissa Marty
Sunday School times will change after Christmas to 10:00-10:45am. Students and teachers will be dismissed from the sanctuary before the rest of the congregation is dismissed.
Changes with GLOW have been discussed and ideas will be put in place.
Adult education, youth group, and confirmation are all going well.
Pastor is working on gathering more information for child and youth protection policies.
We are also discussing getting more games for the educational programs.
Christmas program will be held on Wednesday, December 13th.
- Stewardship – Todd Jensen
No report
- Fellowship – Cheryl Frickel
Many thanks to those who provide and serve treats after the church services. Thanks also to our baristas for making the coffee on Sunday mornings.
JOY was held on October 1st with a Halloween party.
Bassinet Baskets was arranged for Bryce and Morgan Arndt. Thanks to all who helped with the meals.
On October 14th, the Hamilton Co. Cheer Fund held their 2nd annual BBQ contest. Messiah was represented with Roger Scott providing a delicious smoked brisket and Troy McCain provided the beans, which placed first.
Blessing of the quilts and kits was held on October 15th. Thanks to everyone for the many hours of preparation of these items. They will be taken to Kearney in November.
A cookie reception was provided for the two confirmands on October 29th.
- Outreach – [Melissa](#)
Angel Tree is now available and the angels are almost all taken.

Unfinished Business

- Emergency preparedness update
No report
- Update on filling officer manager position
Pastor shared an update on the position about some possibilities.
- Update from strategic planning committees
External Committee
T-shirt design— The design is ready; pricing and the order form were discussed.
- Distribution of fireworks stand money—
Dixie made a motion to distribute the funds as follows: Youth Group--\$1500; Chimes--\$1500; Helping Hands-- \$1500 with the remaining money be used to start the stand next year. Todd seconded the motion and it carried.
- Helping Hands account
Dixie made a motion to accept the proposed changes provided by Craig, Troy seconded the changes, and the motion passed.
- 2024 budget proposal
Diane Gowen was present to discuss the proposed budget. She will return next month.
- Year-End Letter

Council Minutes continued

New Business

- Church Calendar
- Pastor will be on vacation for a week after Christmas.
- The annual meeting was set for February 18th.

Next Meeting – December 18, 2023, 6:30 pm.

Closing Prayer – Steve closed the meeting with prayer.

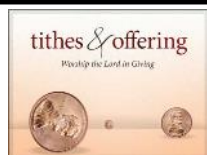
The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm. Respectfully Submitted, Kim McCain

TREASURER'S REPORT

November 2023 Checking Account and
Building Loan Summary

	<u>Beginning</u>	<u>Offering Income</u>	<u>Other Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Ending</u>
Current	\$ 39,197.63	\$ 21,974.40	\$ -	\$ 26,178.53	\$ 34,993.50
Building	\$ 6,768.10	\$ 7,330.00		\$ 3,100.00	\$ 10,998.10
Money Market	\$ 28,962.33	\$ -	\$ 1,519.84	\$ -	\$ 30,482.17
Helping Hands	\$ 1,944.71	\$ 1,268.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 527.15	\$ 4,185.56
Fireworks Stand Account	\$ 7,494.32		\$ 0.68	\$ 5,700.00	\$ 1,795.00
Mission Investment Fund	\$ 16,204.22		\$ 6.51		\$ 16,210.73
Mission Investment Fund - CD 1 year term	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 25,000.00
Total	\$ 125,571.31				\$ 123,665.06

	<u>Beginning</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Ending</u>
Building	\$ 108,917.60	\$ 546.55	\$ 2,522.71	\$ 106,394.89



2024 Offering Envelopes are available to pick up in the Narthex later in December. Please also consider on-line giving through your bank or Simply Giving Program with Thrivent. Feel free to contact the church for more information.

Thank you to Mary Roehrs and Cheryl Frickel for decorating our church for the Advent and Christmas season! Helping this year also were Confirmation students and the High School Youth Group. We so appreciate your time and talents to make our church building look so beautiful all year round!



Year-end giving statements will be mailed out to those who contributed by the end of January.

Thank you to all who provided special music as part of our worship services in December!

- * Our pianists and organist - Julie Jensen, Connie Nicklasson, and Mary Roehrs
- * Special musicians Savanna James on trumpet, Hunter Parr on piano, the Flores family on hand chimes
- * Choir members and Hand Chime members with director Carol Flores





Thank you to those who donated to Messiah's women's group in memory or honor of a loved one to help decorate our sanctuary with beautiful poinsettias.



Given by: Cheryl Bicknase and family in Memory of Clifford & Penny Potter

Given by: Eric & Megan Dam and family in Memory of James Dam

Given by: Delores Danielson and family in Memory of Deryl Danielson and Denny Danielson

Given by: David & Cheryl Frickel in Memory of our loving sons Daniel Frickel and Scott Frickel, and great-granddaughter Lily Marie Honas

Given by: Bill & Diane Gowen and family in Memory of Deryl Danielson, Denny Danielson, Dick Gowen, and Joan Gowen

Given by: Elaine Graves in Memory of Leon Graves, Harold & Fern Stuhr, Dale McBride, and Marcella Stuhr

Given by: Cheryl Holland and family in Memory of Howard Holland, Bill Holland, and Ron Wege

Given by: Wendy Hudson in Memory of Bruce Hudson

Given by: Todd & Julie Jensen in Memory of Julie's father, Roger Nelson

Given by: Berniece Luthy and family in Memory of Roger Luthy and grandson Zane Maltas

Given by: Glenn & Nancy Obermeier in Memory of Elmer Obermeier and Bob & Nina Rauert

Given by: The Penner family in Memory of Ron Penner

Given by: Brandon & Caroline Perry and family in Memory of Sam Foltz and Barb Perry

Given by: Bill & Michelle Sabata in Memory of Cliff & Penny Potter and Ray & Linda Sabata

Given by: Richard Schaffert in Memory of Stella Schaffert and Eric, Vince, & Jordan Schaffert

Given by: Sue Schultz in Memory of Lloyd and Alma Bowers, Ellen Bowers, Charlene Coon, and Kathy Brandenburg

Given by: Roger & Mary Scott in Memory of Roger's sister Linda Papineau

Given by: The Seim family in Memory of LeRoy & Verona Seim

Given by: Craig & Diana Shaffer in Memory of Lawrence & Myrna Shaffer, Dale & Marion Harder, David Harder, Lee Vogt, and Spencer Kelly

Given by: Jane VanderTuig in Memory of Pastor Steve and grandson Eoin VanderTuig

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

WEDNESDAY EVENING ACTIVITIES

Resume January 10th

***GLOW** - K-6th grade, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm, meal is served at 5:45 pm

***CONFIRMATION** - 7th & 8th grade, 6:45 pm - 7:30 pm, meal is served at 5:45 pm

***S.W.A.T. HS YOUTH GROUP** - combined with UMC youth group. 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

S.W.A.T. Christmas Party

On December 13th, Messiah's HS Youth Group, S.W.A.T. combined with the HS Youth from Aurora United Methodist Church came together to celebrate Christmas. This year, 21 students along with leaders Kiley James, Cami Krueger, Tammy Chaney and Pastor Rudy and Carol gathered together at The Ivy. Everyone enjoyed tacos from Pueblo Viejo, games, an ugly Christmas sweater contest and a white elephant gift exchange. It is always a blessing to gather on Wednesday nights and have fellowship with these wonderful young ladies and gentlemen. They are truly a blessing for this community.

A very special Thank you to The Ivy for donating the beautiful space for our gathering. It was very much



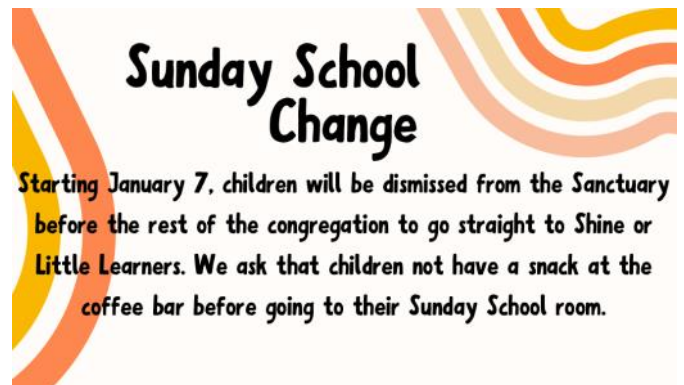
SUNDAY MORNING ACTIVITIES

Resume January 7th

Beginning in January, Little Learners & SHINE will meet from 10:00 - 10:45

***LITTLE LEARNERS** - Pre-K - Kindergarten

***SHINE** - 1st-5th grade



Pack on the Pounds for the Hamilton County Food Pantry - November Food Shelf Challenge

Due to your generosity, 691 food items were collected! In addition, Thrivent will donate \$500 to the Hamilton County Food Pantry! Thank you!



Thank you to all those involved in the wonderful Children's Christmas Programs in December! We thank our dedicated children's program teachers Sarah Lyon, Cassie Wineteer, Stacey Howland, Megan Dam, Allissa Marty, Jane VanderTuig - and the many volunteers who helped make the programs a meaningful and fun experience for the children and all those in attendance!

If you are interested in more details of our Children's Ministries, please contact the church office or the following: Cassie Wineteer, Faith Formation Coordinator, or Allissa Marty, Education Committee Chair, at "education@messiahaurora.org".

Pray for growth in our children's and youths' faith journey!

Looking for Teachers & Helpers for our Education Program

Volunteers are needed to help with ALL of our programs.

A sign-up sheet is at the Information Center for Little Learner teachers and helpers.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Christmas Angel Tree

Thank you to all Messiah members who contributed to The Angel Tree. **This year Messiah provided gifts for 28 children in the Hampton, Giltner, and Aurora school districts.** In addition, with your donations, packages of new socks and underwear were given to several of the schools. A special thanks to Cami Knust for coordinating this event and Laura Jobman, Marilyn Vrana, and Dave Olson for helping organize and deliver the many gifts to the schools. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!
Messiah Outreach Committee



FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES



Anyone close to age 50 and older is welcome to come! Everyone is invited to bring a guest if they wish to do so.

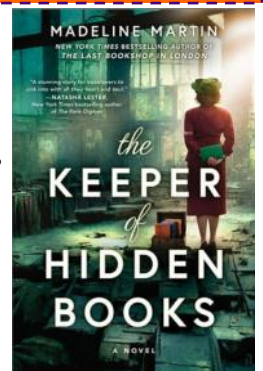
JOY will not be meeting in January.

A big thanks goes to Mark and Laura Jobman for all they did for the December gathering. Everyone appreciated all the extras - salad, drinks, music, Bingo, etc.! Your extra touches made it very special! Also, between all the fancy Christmas cookies and the pizza from Giltner, it was a delicious and fun time!!
Jane VanderTuig

BOOK REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Welcome to Reading in the New Year! Our guest reader this month is Sue Trusdle and she shared the book *The Keeper of Hidden Books* by Madeline Martin.

The Keeper of Hidden Books is a story of true events in Warsaw during World War II. Best friends, Zofia and Janina, stay faithful to each other despite the Nazi occupation. This book depicts the Nazi occupation of Poland and the sheer power of human resilience. In a country torn apart, these two friends save books, so they are not destroyed. Religious beliefs and strong judgment are what both bind and tear apart this place in Poland. Books are powerful, bringing comfort to the reader. They can be the substance that binds people. It is through sheer determination that this friendship, where religion and war try to rip apart, remains strong.



If interested in reading this book or other great titles, visit with Kim or check out church library!
Kim McCain

BIBLE STUDY

Men's Bible Study



Men's Bible Study is meeting Friday, **Jan. 5th** at 6:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This is a time of fellowship and study as we ponder God's word and what it means to us today.



Women's Bible Study Resumes January 4th

Women's Bible Study meets Thursdays at 3:00 pm in the Mission Room. They are studying Max Lucado's "Ten Women of the Bible". This month they are studying Mary, mother of Jesus. New members and drop ins are welcome. We would love to have you join us!

WOMEN OF MESSIAH (WELCA) NEWS

Lutheran World Relief Kits & Quilts



During the month of January, we will focus on collecting bars of soap that will be used for the LWR Personal Care kits. Bars should be at least 3 oz. in size.

Thank you all for your support of LWR!

Messiah Quilters



The Messiah Quilters will begin meeting again January 2nd. They meet the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesdays from 9:00-12:00. All sewers and those able to tie a knot are welcome!



WELCA Meeting Planned for January 28th

There will be a WELCA meeting January 28th at 10:15 a.m. in the Mission Room. All women of the church are encouraged to attend.

Upcoming WELCA Events

Winter Retreat 2024 - "The Fire in Your Heart"

The Central Conference of the Nebraska Women of the ELCA is planning a retreat Saturday, **January 13th, 9:30-3:00, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island.** A registration form and \$20 are due January 3rd. Registration forms are available at the Information Center or contact the church office to have one emailed to you. There will be Bible study, speakers, lunch, plus a few surprises.

Spring Gathering

Mark your calendars for the Spring Gathering on April 13th at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island with the theme: "Open Our Hearts - Listen, Be Kind, Pray".

Autumn Renewal

The Autumn Renewal will be October 12th at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island.

Prayer Shawls



Prayer shawls are available in the narthex for anyone to pick up to take to a friend or family member in need of comfort and a show of love.

Please feel free to take one if you know of someone who could benefit from your thoughtfulness.

Choir News



If you enjoy singing, join the Messiah Choir! The choir will sing in church January 7th.

Practice will be Wednesday, January 3rd, at 7:00 pm. All are welcome!

Sanctuary Stained Glass Windows



You are encouraged to take a few minutes to look around at the beautiful stained glass windows in our sanctuary. Each window depicts a special time or event in the Bible. Near the southeast corner, you'll see a window showing the baptism of our Lord. As we go through the church year, please look around and notice the beauty of the windows and the story they tell.

*The Interfaith Community Choir invites all to join in rehearsals for their Easter Cantata "Once Upon a Morning" by Pepper Choplin. Rehearsals begin Sunday, **January 7th**, 2:00 pm, at the Aurora United Methodist Church. Book cost is \$10. Please contact Raychel at 402-770-9772 for more information.*

A heartfelt thank you for allowing me to serve Messiah as the Office Assistant the last several years. I've truly enjoyed my time getting to know more about our church. I look forward to serving in new ways in the future! Thank you! Diana Shaffer

Messiah' Lutheran' Church

Messiah Lutheran Church, ELCA
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January 2024